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MORRIS

A Handy Guide to the Ruins of  
Furness Abbey.

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# A HANDY GUIDE TO THE RUINS OF FURNESS ABBEY



*Photo by Pettitt.*

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# A Handy Guide

TO THE

# Ruins of Furness Abbey

BY THE LATE

J. P. MORRIS, F.A.S.L.

(Revised by J. TURNER.)

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Seven hundred years ago  
The Norman Monks looked for a pleasant place  
Where they might dwell; and their sagacious head,  
Evanus, found a deep secluded dell,  
Through which the silver river singing ran;  
Where grass was green, and woods were plentiful  
And the strong hills were like God's sentinels  
To guard from harm; and there, within the 'Vale  
Of Nightshade' found the Monks a home.



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DA  
664  
F8 M6 A HANDY GUIDE TO THE

# Ruins of Furness Abbey.

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## GENERAL HISTORY.

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“ There is given  
Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,  
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant  
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power  
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,  
For which the palace of the present hour  
Must yield its pomp and wait till ages are it's dower.  
Oh ! Time, the beautifier of the dead,  
Adorner of the ruin.”

BYRON.

THE celebrated Abbey, whose ruins have furnished the subject of these pages, is situated in a deep and narrow vale, called the “ GLEN OF DEADLY NIGHTSHADE,” at the distance of nearly six miles and a half from Ulverston, and one and a half from Dalton. Its position is admirably in character with that love of a secluded and contemplative life for which the monks were so remarkable.

It was founded July 16th, 1127, under the patronage of Stephen, Earl of Moreton and Boulogne, afterwards King of England, by a



filiation from the monastery of Savigny, in Normandy, who had come to England under the direction of Ewan or Evan, their first Abbot, and remained three years and three days at Tulket, near Preston, in Amounderness, previous to their settlement in Nightshade Vale. At its consecration the building was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

The Monks were originally of the *Benedictine* order, when from the habit of grey cloth which they wore, they were called "Grey Monks"; but in the time of Richard de Baiocis or Bayeux, the fifth Abbot, they were matriculated into the *Cistercian* or *Bernardine* order, to which they belonged at the dissolution of the Abbey; and from the circumstance of their then substituting a white for a grey habit, they received the appellation of "White Monks." They consisted of two distinct classes:—the clerical, who attended the choir, and were wholly devoted to spiritual and literary pursuits; and the laical, or as they were generally called, "the lay brethren," who cultivated the lands and performed the servile work of the Monastery. The latter, though differently occupied, were treated in the same manner as the former, with the exception of their being never indulged in the use of wine. The choir monks do not appear ever to have much exceeded thirty in number, while the lay brethren may be reasonably supposed to have amounted to several hundreds.

In this Abbey a curious custom obtained, which is not known to have been practised in any other Abbey of the order. A registry was kept called the Abbots' Mortuary or Dead Book, in which only those Abbots were entered who had held the abbatial chair for the space of ten years. Through this strange system a difficulty has been ex-

perienced in compiling a complete list of the Abbots of Furness. The following, for which we are indebted to the researches of the late Mr. Beck, is the one now adopted :—

- 1, Ewan de Abrines (D'Avranches), 1127. 2, Endes de Sourdeball, about 1130. 3, Michael de Lancastria. 4, Petro de Eborac (York), about 1145. 5, Richard de Baiocis (Bayeux). 6, John de Cauncefield. 7, Walter de Millum, 1175. 8, Joslenus de Penyn-ton, 1181. 9, Conon de Bardoule. 10, William Niger (Black). 11, Geroldus Bristaldon. 12, Michael de Dalton, about 1194. 13, Richard de St. Quintin. 14, Ralph de Fletham. 15, John de Newby. 16, Stephen de Alverston. 17, Nicholas de Meaux. 18, Robert de Denton. 19, Laurence de Acclom. 20, William de Midleton. 21, Hugo le Brun (Hugh Brown). 22, William de Cockerham. 23, Hugo Skiller, 1297. 24, John de Cockerham, 1303. 25, Alexander de Walton, 1347. 26, John de Cockan, 1367. 27, John de Boulton, about 1381. 28, William de Dalton, 1405. 29, Robert (surname unknown), 1418. 30, Thomas (surname unknown). 31, William Woodward. 32, John Turnour, 1443. 33, Lawrence (surname unknown), 1461. 34, Thomas Chambre, 1491. 35, John Dalton. 36, Alexandre Banke. 37, Roger Pele (or Pyle), 1532.

The Abbot was invested with considerable dignity and possessed of no less power, which made his office an object of ambition to the wealthier families in the surrounding country, who often exerted their influence to secure to it, when vacant, the election of one of their children. Besides being at the head of the institution, he was the chief lord of the liberties and royalties of Furness, in which capacity

he could exercise the sway of a petty prince. Though he never sat in Parliament, it was not from a want of the requisite qualifications, but rather owing to the insulated state of Furness, and the difficulties of travelling in those early times ; for, from certain close rolls, he appears to have been summoned to Parliament several times in the reigns of Henry III., Edward I., and Edward II. In addition to the accommodations of the monastery, he enjoyed those of a separate establishment ; and his residence is now known to have been the large hall at the south east of the Abbey, which has hitherto been variously marked on the plans as the Guest Hall, School-house, and Infirmary.

Among the secular offices belonging to the Institution, that of a sergeant or steward was so important and dignified that it was usually held by men of high rank. There is in the Chapter House, Westminster, an autograph letter from Alexander Banke, the Abbot of Furness, to Cardinal Wolsey, announcing that the convent, according to his request, would grant the stewardship of the monastery to the Earl of Derby, if they might have returned to them a grant, “made and sealyd with our convent seale, and delyvered unto the late erle of Derby, by John Dalton Pertensid, Abbot, in the time of his intrusion.” The letter is dated merely “From Furnes, the xvjth day of July ;” and it appears from it that the country was then suffering under the visitation of a pestilence. “I was comyng,” says the Abbot, “towarde your grace by the space of x miles and more, whereas, I had knowledge how the Terme was adjourned and the great plage renyng, wherefore I retorneyd to my monstry.”

The different deeds which the Abbey had to make in the course of its transactions, were confirmed by attaching to the documents an impression of the *Common Seal of the Convent*, of which the cut (below) is a *fac-simile*. The prominent object in this cut is the Virgin Mary, to whom the Abbey was dedicated. She stands under a canopy in the centre of the circle, encompassed by the stars of heaven—holding in her left arm the infant Saviour, who has a



SEAL OF FURNESS.

halo of glory round his head—and grasping with her right hand a globe, which designates her the queen of the world. On each side of the Virgin is a shield of arms, charged with the lions of England, suspended above by a bunch of nightshade—in allusion to the Abbey being situate in Nightshade Vale—and supported beneath by a monk in his full dress and cowl, and having before him, as well as over his head, a sprig of Nightshade. Underneath the Virgin, in the lower compartment, is a wivern, the device of Thomas Plantagenet, second Earl of Leicester, assumed

by the monks probably in honour of that much esteemed nobleman. Round the whole is the following legend :--  
“SIGILLUM . COMMUNE . DOMUS . BEATE . MARIE . DE .  
FURNESIO.”—“The Common Seal of the house of the Blessed Mary of Furness.”

Few of the transactions of Furness Abbey, either public or private, involve more than an ordinary interest. By far the greater part of them related to the increase or the protection of its property, rights and privileges,—consisted of the various observances and proceedings connected with royal charters, papal bulls, grants, given or received, disputes settled by arbitrators, cases pending in courts of law, and such like affairs—in short, were very much of the same nature with those which are carried on in connection with the establishment of a wealthy nobleman.

Among the more public transactions of the Abbey, besides such as related to its temporal state and prosperity, we may mention its having sent out at different times four filiations, and obtained the precedency of nine houses, inclusive of its own filiations, viz., Calder Abbey, in Cumberland; Swinshead or Swinsheved Abbey, in Lincolnshire; Rushen Abbey, whose site is now called Ballasalla in Man; Fermoi, in Ireland; Ynes; Holy Cross; Wythnea; Corkonrouth; Ynefelughen, with Arkelo and Bello-Becio. We may mention further, its strife for precedence, not long after its foundation, with Waverley Abbey, in Surrey, also of the Cistercian order. The Abbot of Furness founded his claim on the ground of Furness having been established before Waverley, overlooking the circumstance that Furness was originally a daughter of Savigny, and that, when the whole order of Savigny was

matriculated into that of Cisteaux, Furness pleaded an exemption. The dispute was at last settled by the Abbot of Furness being allowed the precedence through all the houses of eleemosyna in England, and the Abbot of Waverley the precedence in the chapters of Abbots throughout England, with a superiority over the whole order.

Among the more private transactions of the Abbey, its attention to agriculture, and its exercise of hospitality, deserve to be distinctly and honourably recorded. Of its attention to agriculture, Mr. West brings forth as evidences the numerous marl pits to be seen on the estates that belonged to it, and the fact that the monks not only sowed wheat themselves, but instructed their tenants to do the same, and used consequently to receive rent in that kind of grain. Though of its exercise of hospitality we are not able to adduce any particular instances (for the allowance made to the tenants of Low Furness that paid provisions to the Abbey, spoken of in the depositions taken in the Brograve case, in 1352, appear to have been just recompenses and not benevolent gifts), yet we are persuaded, on general grounds, that it was very considerable, extending to all classes and all conditions of persons.

In addition to the numerous immunities and privileges conferred upon it by the Roman pontiffs and English kings, the Abbey received, from time to time, benefactions of various kinds and of different amounts from private individuals, as provision for the safety of their souls as well as marks of their attachment to the Institution; and by these means its opulence is said to have increased to such an extent as to be exceeded by that of no religious house in the kingdom except Fountains Abbey in York-

shire. According to a survey taken in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, in the 26th of Henry VIII., two years before the dissolution, its rents were £946 2s. 10d., besides which it received ample sums from the claims of its Abbot as a feudal lord. On account of the much increased value of money, and the still more increased value of estates, since the time of Henry VIII., the above revenues would amount to many thousands in the present day.

The time came, at length, when Furness Abbey was to be reckoned among the things that had been. It was surrendered to the King by a deed signed by Roger Pyle (Abbot), Briant Garner (Prior), and twenty-eight monks, April 9th, 1537, four hundred and thirteen years after its first establishment. For this act of submission the Abbot was soon after invested with the rectory of Dalton, whose profits amounted at that time to about £33 a year; and the monks were favoured with annuities payable out of the revenues of the monastery.

How galling must it have been to the brotherhood thus under their own hands to acknowledge their despoiling enemy as supreme Head of the Church on earth, and to disgorge their wealth into his insatiable coffers, at the same time reducing themselves, to whom ease and plenty had up to the very moment been birthrights, to the situation of houseless vagabonds and miserable beggars! A Christian feeling would dictate good for this evil, prayers for the welfare of him who had persecuted them; but I fear the world would weigh too heavily upon the many, and that they exclaimed with the bard,

“Ruin seize thee, ruthless King.”

The Convent of Furness at this important epoch consisted



of thirty-three monks, according to Sussex's letter, thirty of whom, including the Abbot and Prior, signed the deed of surrender, two others were confined in Lancaster Castle, of whose liberation nothing is recorded, and of the remaining one there is no mention.

A very short time was allowed to elapse after the deed of surrender was signed, before the work of destruction was commenced. On the twenty-third of June, Mr. Southwell, accompanied by Sir Marmaduke Tunstall, son of him who fell at Flodden Field, Sir James Layburn, Sir John Byron, and Ashton their auditor, arrived at the Abbey and commenced the work of destruction by breaking the Common Seal. The Muniments and Chartularies of the Abbey were collected and dispatched to London, and the monks dismissed from the house.

Having cleared the Abbey of its tenants, the Commissioners proceeded with the work of its destruction. Many lawless characters attached themselves to the train of the Commissioners, not only for the purpose of buying the cattle of the monastic establishments, but also it would seem of stealing the lead, or any other portable thing within reach. After the disposal of the cattle, among which were one hundred and twenty milch cows, to the neighbouring people, the more distant comers were permitted to purchase; and this was not more humane than politic. The task of pulling down and defacing the church and steeple was confided to Holcroft, who had already proved his fitness for such employment at the Priory of Cartmel. The lead was stripped from every part of the conventual buildings as well as the church, which was taken and cast into *sows*, and so grasping was

the cupidity of those concerned in this spoliation, that the very dross was remelted in order to extract every particle of metal. It is impossible to read the account of the doings of the King's Commissioners without being impressed with a sense of the grasping cupidity which was displayed in all their transactions. The importunity of suitors to the King for grants of the monastic property is also exposed by Southwell, whose recommendation of the poor servants of the dissolved convent, in preference to strangers, deserves our unbiassed commendation. Indeed, he seems to have acted as humanely, in this particular instance at least, as his duty permitted; and he feelingly implores the interest of Cromwell for the seventy-two tall fellows inhabiting Beaumont Grange, that they might not be driven out to poverty for any man's pleasure. He also speaks well of the loyalty of the Furness people towards their King.

The site and immediate grounds, after having passed through several hands, came into the possession of His Grace the late Duke of Devonshire, by whom they were left to the present owner, Mr. Victor C. W. Cavendish, M.P.

In the meantime, the vast and magnificent edifice—not merely forsaken and left desolate, but subjected to many a rude spoliation—soon fell to decay and ruin. The portions of it that still remain to tell its melancholy tale, while they transport the spectator with emotions of sublimity and grandeur, solemnly remind him of the mortality of all human things.

“ Within this Convent's mould'ring walls,  
 The flitting bat a dwelling finds;  
 The dreary shower unhinder'd falls,  
 And sadly sounds the rushing winds  
 Seeming in every gust to say,  
 Thou, too, O man, shalt pass away.

## TRANSLATION OF THE FOUNDATION CHARTER.

---

“IN the name of the Blessed Trinity, and in honour of St. Mary of Furness, I, Stephen, Earl of Boulogne and Moreton, consulting God, and providing for the safety of my own soul, the soul of my wife, the Countess Matilda, the soul of my lord and uncle, Henry, King of England and Duke of Normandy, and for the souls of all the faithful, living as well as dead, in the year of our lord 1127, of the Roman Indication, the 5th and 18th of the epact.

“Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that roses and flowers of kings, emperors and dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great wither and decay: and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death:

“I therefore return, give, and grant to God and St. Mary of Furness, all Furness and Walney (Wagnea), with the privilege of hunting; with Dalton, and all my lordship in Furness (Infra Frudernesiam) with the men and everything thereto belonging, that is in woods and in open grounds, in land and in water; and Ulverston (Olvestonam), and Roger Braithwaite with all that belongs to him; my fisheries at Lancaster, and Little Guoring (Guorenum

Parvum), with all the land thereof; with sac\* and soct† tol‡ and team§ infangenetheof,|| and everything within Furness, except the lands of Michael le Fleming; with this view and upon this condition, That in Furness an order of regular monks be by Divine permission established; which gift and offering, I, by supreme authority, appoint to be for ever observed; and, that it may remain firm and inviolate for ever, I subscribe this charter with my hand, and confirm it with the sign of the Holy Cross.”

“Signed by

“HENRY, *King of England and Duke of Normandy.*

“THURSTON, *Archbishop of York.*

“AUDIN, } *Bishops.*  
“BOCES, }

“ROBERT, *Keeper of the Seal.*

“ROBERT, *Earl of Glo’ster.’*”

\* *Saccum.*—The power of imposing fines upon tenants and vassals within the lordship.

† *Socum.*—The power and authority of administering justice.

‡ *Tollum.*—A duty paid for buying and selling, &c.

§ *Team, Theam.*—A royalty granted for trying bondmen and villans, with a sovereign power over their villan tenants, their wives, children, and goods, to dispose of them at pleasure.

|| *Infangtheft.*—The power of judging of theft committed within the liberty of Furness.



TRANSLATION OF THE DEED OF SURRENDER.

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“To all the faithful in Christ, to whom these presents shall come, I Roger by the providence of God, Abbot of the monastery of St. Mary of Furness, in the County of Lancaster, and the Convent of the same send greeting goodwill, and benediction in the Lord. Know Ye, that we the said Abbot and Convent with our unanimous and full assent and consent, particularly for divers special considerations moving us interiorly thereto, and also for the use and defence of this kingdom, and for the good and safe government of this distant portion of the realm aforesaid, have freely given, granted, and surrendered up unto the hands of the lord the King, that now is. Henry VIII., by the grace of God, king of England and France, defender of the Faith, lord of Ireland, and head upon earth of the Anglican Church, have surrendered our monastery of Furness aforesaid, and also the site and foundation of the same, and all the goods, chattels, jewels, and church ornaments of the same, and also the debts, actions, and other things whatsoever, unto us, or any of us, or unto the said monastery, appertaining, belonging or owing, and also all manner of domains, castles, manors, lands, tenements, advowsons of churches and chantries, knights’ fees, rents, reversions, liberties and services, with all our

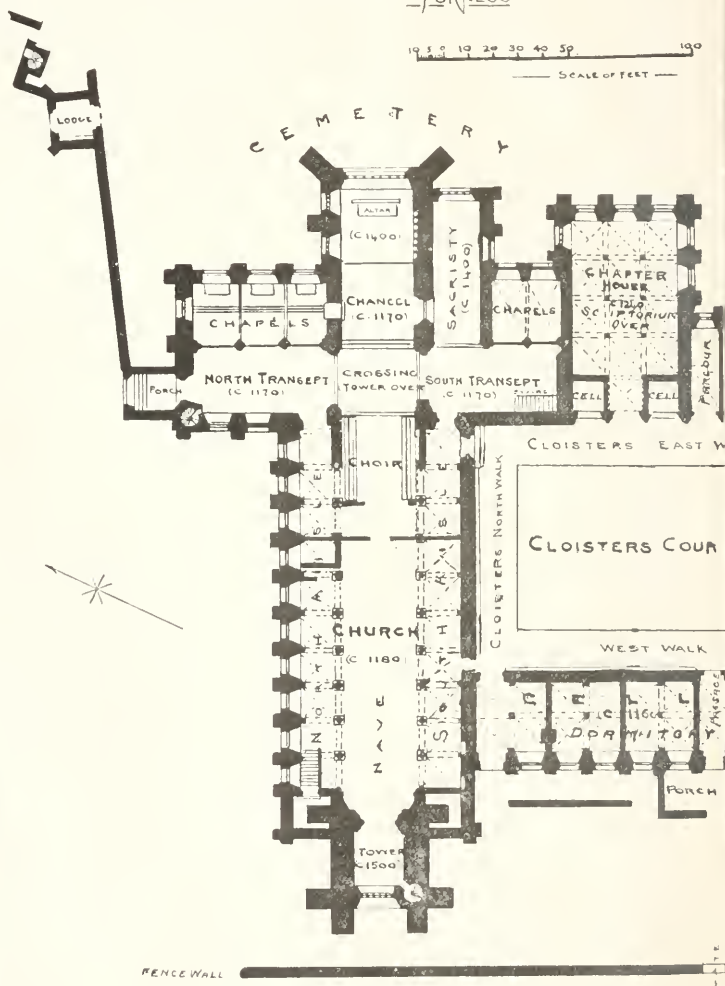
hereditaments whatsoever, in the counties of York and Lancaster, or elsewhere in the realm of England and Ireland and in the Isle of Man, to have and to hold, all and singular, the said monastery, domains, castles, manors, lands, tenements, advowsons of churches and chantries, knights' fees, rents, reversions, liberties and services, and other our hereditaments and premises whatsoever, to the said lord our king, and unto his heirs, kings of England for ever, in augmentation and increase of the honour of his royal majesty, and of his heirs, kings of England, and for the use and defence of this kingdom, against its enemies and rebels, and we also will and desire that our present act may be enrolled both in the Chancery Court of the Duchy of Lancaster, and in the King's Court held at Lancaster before his justices there, as well as in the Chancery Court at Westminster in the County of Middlesex, before the king or his justices there.

“In witness whereof we have with our unanimous and full assent and consent, affixed our common seal to these presents. Given in the Chapter House of our said monastery, the ninth day of April, in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of our said lord the king, and in the year of our Lord and Saviour, one thousand five hundred and thirty-seven.

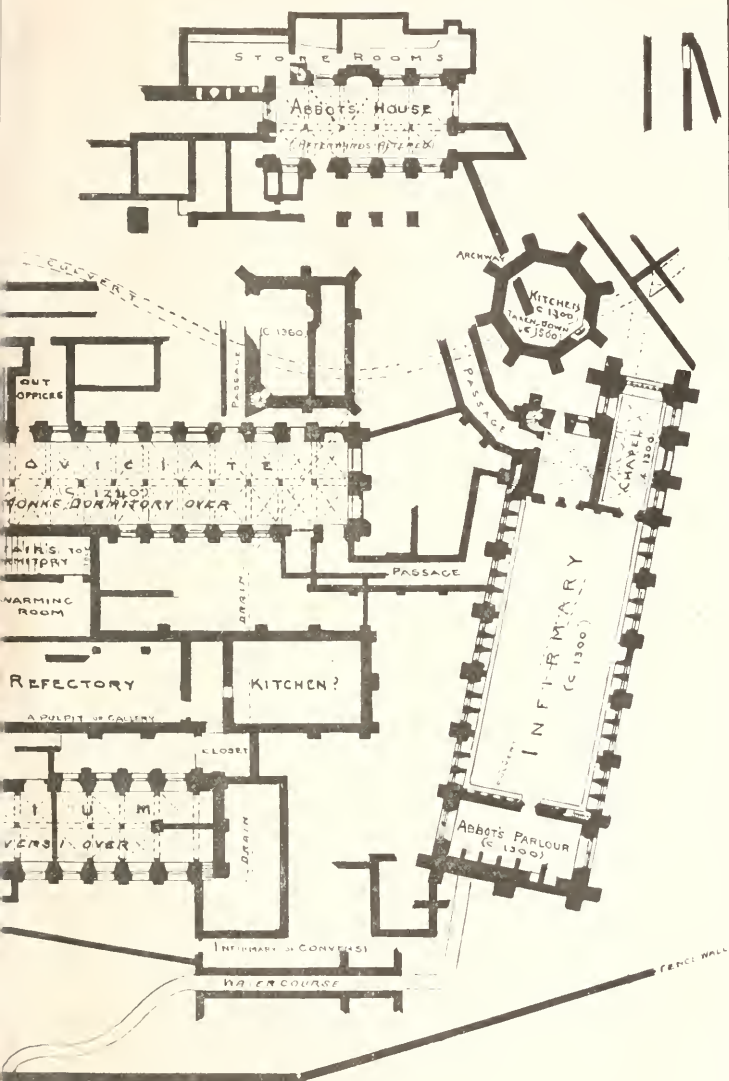
“By me, Roger, Abbot of Furness. By me, Brian Garner, Prior. By me, John Thornton. By me, John Groyn. By me, John Harrington. By me, Thomas Hornby. By me, Michael Hamilton. By me, Richard Scales. By me, Matthew Kirkby. By me, Thomas Settle. By me, John Troughton. By me, Roger Preston, By me, Thomas Snell. By me, Hugh Brown. By me, James Langcliff.



— PLAN OF —  
 — THE CISTERCIAN ABBEY OF ST MARY'S —  
 — FURNESS —









By me, Christopher Carr. By me, William Newark. By me, Anthony Plumer. By me, James Foster. By me, Christopher Masheder. By me, William Barwick. By me, William Rigg. By me, Christopher Malley. By me, Egid Bolland. By me, Stephen Skipton. By me, William Forrest. By me, Richard Maydaff. By me, Robert Kitchen. By me, Stephen Staniforth. By me, Edward Blondell.

“Sealed and delivered in the presence of us, on the day and year above stated.

“Robert Sussex. Anthony Fitzherbert. Thomas Butler. Richard Hoghton. John Byron. John Claydon, Priest. Thomas Landton, Knight. Marmaduke Tunstall, Knight.”



DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF THE RUINS.

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The Ruins of St. Mary's, Furness, are second only in magnitude to those of Fountains Abbey, in Yorkshire, and possessing as they do fine examples of various styles of architecture, the noble ruins are an interesting study to the artist, antiquary, and general tourist. It is for the latter these pages are compiled; to those who wish for a more exhaustive account we may refer them to the splendid monograph "ANNALES FURNESIENSES," by the late T. A. Beck, Esq.

Considerable excavations have been carried out during the past few years by the Cumberland and Westmoreland Archæological and Antiquarian Society, with a view of completing the ground plan. The work has been done under the able and personal superintendence of Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, M.A., from whom the writer has received much valuable information.

The first object of interest that meets the eye of the visitor on leaving the Railway Station is the

## GATEWAY CHAPEL,

which was built in the early part of the 14th century in the geometrical style of architecture. It was entered by a round-headed doorway. On the right hand side are the

remains of a stoup for holy water, and above the doorway a small trefoil-headed niche, probably for a statue of the Virgin. At the east end are the remains of an altar with steps leading up to it; and in the south wall the Sedilia of three stalls, with the accompanying piscina and credence. This chapel was for strangers who visited the Monastery. Cistercian Monastic Churches were not Parish Churches, so that provision was made for persons staying in the Guest or Almshouses. To the west of the chapel there is a large archway over the road, and a smaller one to the right of it. Following the road to the south will be seen some low walls on each side; these are the remains of

### THE GATEHOUSE.

This was the principal entrance to the Abbey. There has been a large arch in the centre and a wicket gate on the east side of it; a covered hall on the north and one on the south side. To the west are the remains of the Porter's Lodge. These buildings belong to the Transitional period, and have been of some architectural importance. The Gatehouse opened into the outer courts of the Abbey, which contained the bakehouse, stables, brewhouse, and other menial buildings, as well as the hospitium and eleemosynary, and possibly a secular infirmary. The Hotel stands on the site of, and incorporates, though much altered, one of the guest houses. Traces of other buildings have been seen underneath the lawn and shrubs on the east and south sides. Further on will be noticed the remains of a 15th Century Gatehouse. This stood in a wall which extended from the above-mentioned buildings to the north porch of the

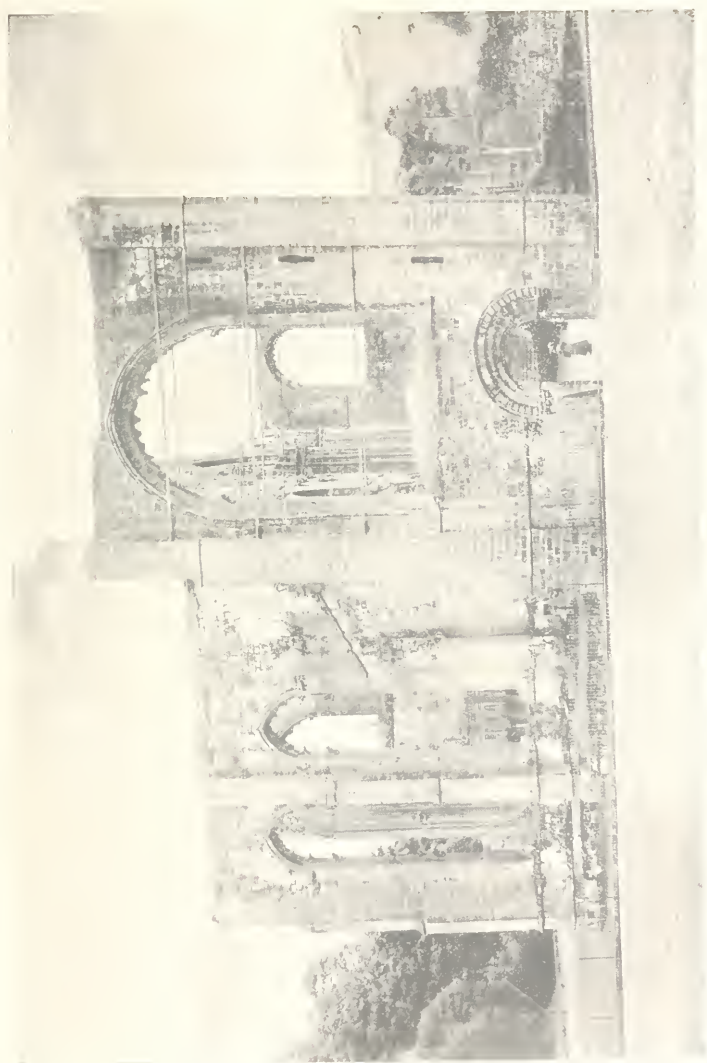
Church. There remains on each side of the interior a stone bench, and on the east side of the lodge a large stone coffin and an Abbot's tombstone. We now come to

### THE ABBEY CHURCH.

The original structure was Norman in style of architecture, with Chancel, and a large and smaller apsidal Chapel on north and south sides, but when the Monks were matriculated into the Cistercian Order they rebuilt and enlarged the Transepts, and added an additional eastern chapel to each. The Church was then according to the Cistercian plan, in the form of a Latin Cross, with a central tower, north and south transepts with chapels, chancel, nave and aisles of ten bays. The Church is entered by a handsome round-headed archway.

### THE NORTH TRANSEPT

was screened off by a wall between the piers of the lantern. Looking eastward are three pointed arches supported by clustered pillars with square caps; these formed the entrance to as many chapels. Portions of the altars still remain. There have been screen walls dividing the chapels and a screen between the arches. The ground piscina is still to be seen in the northern one, and in the south wall a pretty shaft with a piscina on top. Near this, part of the tomb of William De Lancaster, the 8th Baron of Kendal, projects from the wall, and projecting from the south side of the wall is the tomb of the 6th Baron of Kendal. In the north-west corner near the doorway there has been a circular staircase, which led through the triforium to the central tower. The early windows in the church were all round headed, but were nearly all replaced with pointed







ones with tracery of the 15th century.

### THE CENTRAL TOWER

has been raised on four fine pointed arches, of which the eastern one only remains. These were sprung from clustered piers, the two eastern being handsomely corbelled; the north western for some distance above its base assumes the form of a pillar. The opposite one to the south-west was probably similar to it, but from an ambitious desire to increase the height of this tower at a later period, or from a want of strength in this part of the building, it had given way and was subsequently enclosed in a heavy mass of masonry formed by a panelled buttress on the east side; on the west by building up the adjoining nave arch, and on the south by reducing the aisle arch to a doorway. The remaining arch is fifty-eight feet; the height of the original tower can only be conjectured, but according to rule it would be low.

### THE CHANCEL,

with its beautiful Sedilia and noble East Window, forty-seven feet high and twenty-three feet wide. The arch, mullions, and tracery have all disappeared, and we have now only—

“ A mighty window, hollow in the centre,  
 Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,  
 Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,  
 Streaming from off the sun like seraph's wings,  
 Now yawns all desolate : now loud, now fainter  
 The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings  
 The owl his anthem, where the silenced choir  
 Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.”

On the outside of the Chancel window, at the foot of the label moulding, and under an arched festoon, are two crowned busts as brackets, representing King Stephen and his Queen Matilda.

The Chancel was also lighted by four other windows of smaller dimensions, of which two were placed in the north and two in the south wall. Those in the north wall are pointed, narrow, and long, the breadth being eight feet four inches, and about forty feet in height. The external mouldings are finished with well-executed brackets, representing "one of those nondescript animals," as Mr. BECK humorously remarks, "which it was the pleasure of the early architects and heralds to create, but whose prototype never issued from the womb of nature." The internal mouldings finish on "scutiferous angels." The southern windows are placed over the Sedilia, and are much smaller. These four have each been windows of three lights. About six feet from the wall, under the east window, there yet remains the basement of the platform upon which stood the high altar. This platform has been twelve-and-a-half feet long, by four feet broad.

In the south wall, east of the Belfry Tower, is

### THE SEDILIA,

"The seat of stone that runs along the wall."

This is a truly beautiful piece of workmanship, and is supposed to have been executed by Italian artists. It is much to be regretted that more care has not been exercised in protecting this superb work of art from the vandalism of the Browns and Smiths, who have sadly disfigured the seats and back by cutting their names upon it, and also from the mutilation of the specimen-hunting tourists who have broken off nearly all the groined and sculptured bosses.

The late Mr. BECK in his "ANNALES FURNESIENSES,"



THE SHRINE  
OF THE VIRGIN MARY



*Furness Abbey, East Window*

has given such a graphic and exhaustive description of this object that we cannot do better than quote the passage in his own words. (See engraving, p. 8). "This beautiful series of seats consists of five larger and two smaller niches, elaborately sculptured, and presenting an admirable specimen of the enriched Perpendicular style which characterizes the Chancel. These seats or stalls are raised from the floor of the Chancel by a step, and separated from each other by a stone screen of pierced trefoil panels, a corresponding one being sunk in the pier at each end. The exterior upper portion of this screen is worked into a kind of cornice or capital, from which springs the highly embellished, projecting, triple-faced canopy, each division of which contains a septfoiled arch with trefoiled point; its ogee hood-moulding is formed of delicately-chiselled foliage, with handsome crockets and finials, the latter in the form of elegantly expanded flowers with leafy pistils rising from the centre; the moulding and its ornaments being boldly relieved from a trefoil-headed panel. Each compartment of the canopy is subdivided at the angles by a square buttress, terminated by a purfled pinnacle; the two in front finish with a pendant of vine leaves and bunches of grapes. The ceiling of these stalls is worked into ribs and groins, the intersections being tied with a boss in the shape of a deformed head.

"The canopies are surmounted by an enriched cornice, the lower half of which contains three bands of horizontal mouldings; the upper is decorated with a series of trefoils, surrounded with ogee mouldings, the apex of which is a diamond-formed finial, an elegant variety of the Tudor flower: the roof above them is sloping and in three planes

“ Eastward of the stalls, and on the same level with them, is a niche of the same size, having a smaller one on each side of it. In the smaller niches are supposed to have hung the towels used by the officiating ministers at the high altar after ablution. The larger niche held the piscinæ, or bazon, into which the water was poured after ablution.

“ The whole range is flanked by tall thin buttresses in three stages, the middle one decorated with panelling, and the upper terminated by gabets, a purfled pinnacle, and a finial.”

The whole of this has been richly painted and gilded, as indeed were all the internal decorations of our early monastic institutions. In an old poem, “Peres, the Ploughman's Crede,” written about 1394, A.D., the writer describes an Abbey similar to that of Furness. The pillars were painted and polished, and carved with curious knots. The windows were well wrought and lofty. The buildings were well walled round, with postern doors for easy egress. There were gardens and “erberes,” with well-clipped borders, a cross curiously carved, and “tabernacles,” used for reconnoitering. Then there was the Minster, with its arches, and crockets, and knots of gold, its painted windows, glorious with coats of arms and merchants' marks; its tombs, with knights in alabaster, and lovely ladies by their side in gay garments; its cloisters, pillared and painted, covered with lead, and paved with painted tiles; its chapter-house, beautifully carved, and with a splendid ceiling. Such was Furness Abbey when in its prime.

Arranged in rows within the Chancel are the sepulchral

slabs, tombstones, and effigies that have been found in and around the ruins. There

“Placed in the foxglove and the moss,  
Behold a parted warrior's cross.”

The cross-legged effigy in the centre of the Chancel, is said to represent William de Lancaster, the 6th Baron of Kendal, whose remains were placed in a tomb on the north side of the Chancel in 1246, underneath one of the arches filled up at a later date.

Most of these slabs have a floriated cross sculptured upon them, some incised and others in relief. The inscriptions are now almost illegible; the following may, however, be made out:—

“DOMINA : XTINA : SECUNDA.”

This, in all probability, belongs to Christiana wife of Ingelram de Gynes, and daughter of William de Lindsey, though there were several others of the same name benefactors to the Abbey. A Christina, daughter of Alexander de Bouth, gave to Furness twenty-four acres of land in Marten, during the Abbacy of William Cockerham, about 1290.

“HIC JACET WIES GRAINDEORGE.”

The Graindeorges were a powerful family in Yorkshire, and were large benefactors to the Abbey. Two of them are known to have been buried in Furness, as on a slab upon which no inscriptions can be found, there are three ears of Grain. Old Guillim, in his “Display of Heraldry,” says:—“He beareth, azure, *three Ears of Ginny Wheate, Couped and Bladed*; or, by the name of *Grandgorge*. This is a kind of *Graine* not much inferior to our *Wheate* for use, but for *multiplication, beauty, and largeness*, much beyond

it : and of this, most undoubtedly true is the saying of our Saviour, that *one Graine* bringeth forth *fifty*, yea an *hundred fold*."

" . . . NUS : ROBERTUS : de :—

. . . S : FURNESII : QUINT : "

which may be completed thus :—" Dominus Robertus Dei Electione Abbas Furnesii Quintus—" "Lord Robert, by the choice of God, the fifth Abbot of Furness." This was Robert de Denton, the fifth decennial Abbot, according to the mortuary, but the eighteenth *de facto*.

" ADAM DE GRIHOLM. "

This was the Adam de Grefholm who confirmed the grant to the Abbey, by Helias de Bolton, of all Grefholm and Driten, and who, according to West, made his Will in December, 1242.

" ROGERUS DE HOYLANDIA. "

We are unable to identify this person, but from the *valor* of Pope Nicholas IV., taken in 1291, we find that the Abbot of Furness had property in Hoyland, valued at ii. s. viii. d.

" . . . JACET GODITH. . . . "

This lady was probably one of the Le Flemings. Sir Michael had a daughter of this name, to whom he gave, as a marriage portion, three carucates of land in Adgarley and half a carucate in Urswick. It has, however, been assumed, that Sir Michael's daughter was buried at Aldingham, as on the south side of the Parish Church, there is a slab bearing an incised floriated cross, with the following inscription, which is only just legible :—

" HIC JACET GODITHA DE SCALES. "

The name may, however, have been borne by many



members of the family.

“ HIC JACET . . . TI FLANDREN . . . ”

This was another member of the Le Flemings, who were also called Flandrencis.

### THE SOUTH TRANSEPT

was originally built similar to the North, with its eastern chapels. When the chancel was rebuilt the northern one was extended by a bay, and a wall was built dividing this from the others, and afterwards it was used as the Sacristy; a handsome Piscina is built in the south wall. There were two pointed windows, one in the east wall and the other in the south. In the clustered pillars dividing these chapels there is a trefoil-headed niche, probably for small statues, and in the south-west corner of this transept are the remains of a stairway, down which the Monks would enter the Church for Matins and Lauds. A lamp bracket adjoins these stairs, and on the left side of the doorway leading into the south aisle are the remains of a stoup for holy water. All the upper windows in the Transepts are of the same style and period as the rebuilding of the Chancel and the eastern walls of the chapels.

### THE CHOIR

has probably extended over a portion of the crossing and two bays westwards; the screen occupied the third bay, the Abbot's side being the south or right-hand side on entering, the Prior's side on the north. One section of the screen crossed between the second pillars of the nave, the other crossed both nave and aisles. In a line with the third pillars, and over the screen, there would be a bridge. The remainder of the nave was the choir of the

conversi, or working brothers; this originally extended six bays west of the screen. The stumps of nine pillars still remain on the north side of the nave and five on the south, being round and clustered alternately. All the responds in the north aisle are clustered, those in the south cylindrical. The aisles have been vaulted and groined as well as the chapels on the east of the transepts. The nave, transepts, and chancel had wooden roofs covered with lead. The eastern bay of the north aisle formed a chantry. Here may be noticed a row of ten beautifully-decorated panels, geometrical in design, which were gilded. Lying opposite were found two fine effigies of a cross-legged knight and a lady, now removed into the infirmary chapel for better preservation. The fourth bay of this aisle formed a chapel, and the drain still remains on the step. A screen wall extended down each side of the nave at the back of the choir stalls, built flush with the face of the pillars. This was taken down at a later period from behind the choir of the conversi, and the pillars were completed.

### THE WESTERN TOWER

has evidently been intended to be an important addition to the church; in style of architecture it is perpendicular (c. 1500), and very massive. The walls are nearly sixty feet high and ten feet in thickness, and are supported by very massive buttresses, each buttress having a niche and pedestal for a statue. The west window was of four lights, with transoms. Some curious bosses remain in the jamb. In the south-west angle a small door leads to a circular staircase on to the top of the south wall, from which an excellent



*Furness Abbey, Lancaster*



view of the ruins is obtained. This tower, which was never completed, was built partly into the nave, the west front being taken down. As to whether there was a west doorway in the old front there is no evidence to show, but a flight of steps at the west end of the north aisle appear to have led to a later door, by which strangers could enter on those occasions when permitted to do so. The Prior's door at the south-west angle was cut off and another entrance broken through the south wall at the junction of the north and west cloisters, now built up with old material.

### THE CONVENTUAL BUILDINGS

were on the south side of the church, grouped as usual round the cloisters. A round-headed opening in the east wall formed the entrance into the original book closet and sacristy, but when the transepts were extended, the wall was refaced on the inner side, and the recess was afterwards used as a common book case where books were kept for use in the reading cloister. Along the foot of the north wall the remains of a bench may be seen.

### THE CLOISTERS

as first built were square, with east to west refectory on south side, with slype at east and kitchen at west end. These buildings were afterwards destroyed and the cloisters enlarged. The latter were covered with a pointed wooden roof, with a lean-to over. The rafter niches and grove for splashing remain on the east wall. The buildings grouped round the cloisters are the cellarium, refectory, and chapter house.

## THE CELLARIUM

extended two hundred and twenty-five feet south from the church, and on the west side of the cloisters not much more than the foundations remain. Five cross walls divided the building on the ground floor. The Monastic cellar included the whole domain of the cellarer, and besides store rooms, it contained the living apartments and working rooms of the lay brethren. The cellarer managed the whole of the house-keeping, and had charge of all the conventual buildings, as well as the granges and farms. A row of pillars down the centre of this building supported a vaulted and groined roof, with plain ribs and a dormitory above for lay brethren. A doorway still remains which connected the lay brother's dormitory with a staircase, by which they could easily go to and from their choir, which was at the west end of the nave. To the west of the cellarium are the remains of a smaller building of the 15th century. This may have been an entrance lodge or perhaps an extension of the cellarium. The cellarer was what we should now call a steward.

## THE REFECTORY

range extended 150 feet southwards from the cloisters, Unfortunately nothing but the foundations are left. Recent excavations, however, have proved the existence of three buildings on this site at different periods, the entrance being from the south cloister, with the warming room on the east side near the day stair-case to the dormitory, and at the south-west angle of the cloisters was the lavatory. The Cistercian order were for a long period vegetarians, neither eating fish, flesh, nor







fowl with the exception of those in the infirmary. They were at a later period granted a dispensation by the Pope, allowing them to eat flesh meat on three days per week, viz., Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, but this they were not allowed to eat in the same hall in which they had their vegetarian diet, so that they reconstructed their refectory, having a misericorde or flesh meat hall on the ground floor, with a vegetarian hall above. Judging by what little remains of this section this seems to have been the arrangement here, with a large kitchen at the south end. There would be the usual high table and a pulpit, from which one of the monks would read a portion of scripture or some other religious work whilst the others ate their food.

On the east side of the cloisters and facing the court are three arches of the same size and style, the centre one leading into the chapter house. Those on either side were probably book closets. Evidences of shelves remain in the one on the north side. These semicircular arches are composed of numerous concentric rings in four sets of five each, with the dog tooth ornament round the hood mould. The capitals are of marble. Passing through the middle arch we enter the vestibule, the roof of which is vaulted and groined with a fine boss. In the north and south wall there is a trefoiled arcade containing sedilia. The seats, shafts, and capitals were of marble. The inner arch of the vestibule, unlike the outer one, is pointed.

We are now in

#### THE CHAPTER HOUSE,

which is 60 feet 6 inches long, by 45 feet 6 inches

wide, and was the most beautifully decorated as well as the most important room in the conventual buildings. It was divided into three aisles of four bays by two rows of slender fluted pillars. The capitals of the corbel shafts, as well as the pillars, were moulded and foliated alternately. These pillars supported the vaulting. Round three walls the vaulting ribs spring from triple groups of filleted shafts rising from moulded corbels, but on the east side are foliated corbels with cross stems, and between each vaulting shaft there is in each bay an arcade of two pointed arches, with round ornamental panels above. The room was lighted by six lancet windows on the east, two on the north, and four on the south side. and a raised platform or dais was carried round three sides. The walls have been coated with stucco, divided by red lines into panels, and the whole interior painted and gilded. The details of the Chapter House are worthy of close study. Shortly after Terce every morning the Monks assembled in the Chapter House. The Chapter opened with Martyrology for the day, after which followed the commemoration of the departed, when each saint was named, and on some days a sermon and a chapter of the rules of the order were read and discussed. Then followed open confession of Monastic offences and mutual accusations. Any Monk convicted of serious offence received discipline on his knees. Chapter then being concluded, the Monks went to various kinds of labour, in which the lay brothers assisted.

Within this hall, early in January, 1134, sat Eudes de Sourdeval, second Abbot of Furness, on the momentous occasion of sending off the first filiation of the monks of

3511. *St. John's Church, New York*





Furness, to Calder Abbey, in Cumberland, founded by Ranulph de Meschines, Earl of Chester. Brother Gerold was the Abbot elect, and his twelve companions were:—Robert de Lisle, Tocka of Lancaster, John of Kingston, Theodoric of Dalton, Orm of Dalton (probably of Orms-gill), Roger, the under-cellarer, Allan of Urswick, Wydo of Bolton, William of Bolton, Peter de Poictou, Ulph of Richmond, and Bertram, of London.

Here also William Skelsmergh, of Westmorland, on the Sunday before Ascension, in the year 1247, made his Will, in which occurs the only notice of a hospital for lepers near Ulverston. In this hall, on the 3rd of May, 1256, the Abbot and his monks assembled to receive in state, Magnus, King of Man and the Isles, and it was here that the same monarch granted to the Canons of Conishead a free port in all his harbours.

The last and most memorable scene enacted within these walls, occurred on the 9th day of April, 1537, when Roger Pyle, Abbot, and Briant Garner, his Prior, with twenty-eight monks, assembled in full chapter to sign and seal the fatal deed of surrender; and thus the noble Chapter-house was left a nesting place for owls and bats, and its gilded and painted walls to the corroding influence of the lichen and the moss:—

“ One holy Henry reared the Gothic walls,  
And bade the pious inmates rest in peace  
Another Henry the kind gift recalls,  
And bids devotion's hallowed echoes cease.

Vain is each threat or supplicating prayer,  
He drives them exiles from their blest abode,  
To roam a dreary world in deep despair—  
No friend, no home, no refuge but their God.”

BYRON

Adjoining the three arches in front of the Chapter House are two smaller ones of the same period. These opened into the vaulted undercroft of the dormitory, 202 feet 6 inches long and 30 feet 6 inches wide. The northern one led into the Locutory or Parlour, where the Monks were allowed to withdraw from the cloister when they wished to speak on any matter of importance, after getting permission from their superior by signal, strict silence being preserved in the cloister. Through the next arch was a passage leading to some buildings on the east side, and also to the Monk's cemetery. The remaining twelve bays most probably formed the apartments of the Novices, who were kept entirely separate, to prevent them from revealing secrets if they returned to the world. The corbels in the parlour and passage remain, and have been more ornate than the remainder. Four are moulded and three foliated. The vaultings are moulded, the remainder of the undercroft being plain. This section was divided into two aisles by octagonal pillars, which supported the vaultings. A doorway in the third bay from the passage leads to the remains of some out-offices; another in the ninth bay opened into a passage which may have had connection with the Abbot's House. At the south end of the undercroft a somewhat curious arrangement existed. Two arches on the east and west sides, and two in the south wall were open, but about the end of the thirteenth century a fire-place was built in the south arch on the east side, blocking up the arch. Over the full length of the undercroft were the dormitories of the monks and novices. Eight windows remain on each side at the northern end, and part of the

doorway connecting with the day stairs. Over these stairs was a gallery with a vaulted roof, and the corbel table may still be traced in the wall on the west side. At the end of the conventual buildings are the remains of The Infirmary, which consisted of a great hall 126 feet long and 47 feet 9 inches wide, with a chapel and serving room at its east end, and at the west end a parlour with a floor over. In this parlour are the remains of a fireplace, and at the south-east angle the lower portion of a circular staircase, which led to the upper floor. The hall must have been a very handsome building judging from what remains at the east end. In the lower arcading there are five large pointed arches, with a lesser one at each end. Three of the arches are pierced with doorways, two leading into the serving room and the other into the Chapel. In the small arch on the south side there is an aumbrey. The upper arcade consists of six arches, supported by trefoil shafts resting on a moulded base. The hall was five bays long. In the middle bay on the south side are the remains of a fireplace. This building was well lighted by small windows in the lower and larger ones in the upper stage. The chapel, which still retains its vaulted ceiling of three bays, is 45 feet long and 23 feet 3 inches wide. The vaulting springs from trefoiled shafts, which rest on a stone bench, and a string course runs round 4 feet 3 inches above. This Chapel was lighted by a large window in the east end, with a peculiar flat, obtuse angular head and hood moulding, which distinguish this front. There are three windows on the south and one on the north side, almost triangular, having a very slight curve. Each window was of two lights

with peculiar tracery above. Below the sill of the eastern window, on the south side, are the remains of the piscina and credence table. In this chapel are collected for preservation some monumental effigies and architectural fragments, which have been found from time to time during excavations. Among the former are two curious-looking military effigies of the early part of the 13th century, lying on their sides, with peculiar flat-topped cylindrical helmets and triple surcoats, with a belt round the waist. They are quite unique, and are the earliest effigies in the kingdom. A cross-legged knight and lady, which have undoubtedly been table monuments.

“ Outstretched together are exprest  
He and my lady fair,  
With hands uplifted on the breast,  
In attitude of prayer;  
Long-visaged, clad in armour, he—  
With ruffled arm and bodice she.”

These are the two referred to as found in the north aisle. There are also the trunks of a cross-legged knight and a lady, and also the headless effigies of an Abbot and a Cistercian Deacon. The latter is quite unique. On the breast are a book, crossed stole, maniple, alb, girdle, and apparel. Of the architectural fragments may be noticed some fine carving, consisting of foliage, mouldings, crockets, corbels, brackets, gargoyles, and cresset stones. The Serving Room was lighted by a window in the east wall, near to which is a doorway. On the north side are two doorways, one leading by a circular staircase to the floor above. The other opened into a covered passage with a gallery over, which curves round to the east over the water course. The floor over the chapel and serving







room could be reached by the above-mentioned staircase, from the top of which a passage leads westward. Midway in this passage another flight of steps to the south ascend to the upper floor. A doorway opening to the north from the passage led to the gallery. The circular stairs had also connection with a passage through the thickness of the north wall to a curved staircase, descending to a peculiar-headed doorway from which another passage connected the infirmary with the south-east of the claustral buildings. From a recess in the west wall of the room over the chapel, a shaft descends into the watercourse which runs under the buildings. From the recess there is a small slanting opening into the great hall.

The Infirmary in a Cistercian Monastery was a building of great importance, provision being made for the convenience and comfort of the aged and infirm as well as the sick monks. The rooms over the chapel and serving room were most probably set apart for the sick, together with the apartments of the infirmarer, who had jurisdiction over and resided at the infirmary. To the east of the serving room are the remains of a 13th century octagonal kitchen. There has been a semi-circular fireplace on the south side, three stone troughs and a drain. This kitchen had a vaulted roof, supported by a centre pillar. A big wall was built partly across the ruined kitchen, joining the Abbot's house at the south-west corner.

On the east side of the watercourse are the ruins of the Abbot's House. This was not only the house of the Abbot, but had accommodation for the Father Abbot when he visited the Abbey. It consisted of a handsome hall 70 feet long and 26 feet wide, with a floor above. It belongs

to the Lancet period (c. 1240). The hall was of five bays the vaulting being supported by four pillars. The main entrance into the hall was by a doorway in the second bay from the north in the west wall. There was also a doorway at the north end and one in the south; and, to the east of each, a small trefoiled-headed opening through the walls. There was another doorway at the north end of the east wall, just outside of which a circular staircase led up to the rooms above. A large fireplace remains in the east wall with a corbel with dog-tooth ornament on the north side, and a lamp bracket adjoining. The hall was lighted by three pairs of lancets in the east wall, four pairs in the west, and one pair in the north and south walls. The window seats in the north and east walls are almost intact. The upper floor of this building was enlarged at a later period. Corbels were built in the rock on the east side to spring arches over to the buttresses, and on the west side piers were built to carry arches to the west wall, thus making the upper floor much larger. Considerable alterations and additions were also made at the north end. In the wall on the east side north of the hall there is a circular shaft, which was connected with a well to supply these buildings with water. The openings through the wall on each side of the shaft were windows. The mill race ran under these buildings and served as a drain. A smaller building lying westwards of the above was erected during the 14th century. It was 45 feet 6 inches long, and 37 feet 6 inches wide, divided into two or three compartments on the ground floor. A circular staircase in the north-west angle led to the upper floor. It is probable that this building was for the accommoda-

tion of the Abbots of Monasteries that were filiated to Furness who would have to visit the mother monastery periodically. A number of other buildings of less importance extended further south, including a corn mill, great barn, workshops, etc., but of these little trace is left. The whole Abbey was surrounded by a boundary wall which enclosed 65 acres of land. To the west of the conventual buildings the road goes through the remains of the

### WEST GATEWAY,

which contained the usual apartments for the porters. There were also several postern gateways for the convenience of the brethren when going out to their labour.

There are two points from which the visitor may obtain magnificent bird's eye views of the whole ruins—firstly from the top of the Western Tower; and, secondly, from the summit of the Beacon Hill, on the east side of the Abbey. Good general views may be obtained from almost any part of the ruins.

The picturesque hotel adjoining the Abbey was formerly the Furness residence of the Preston family, and was known as the "Manor House." A curious tale is told, in "Sandford's MS. History of Cumberland," of the peculiar manner in which the Prestons first became the owners of Furness Abbey. The story has been printed thus in *Notes and Queries*, and reprinted in "Choice Notes," from the same serial:—"Sir Thomas Curwen, knight, in Henry the Eighth's time, an excellent archer at twelve-score marks: and went up with his men to shoote with that renowned king at the dissolution of the abbeys: And the king says to him, 'Curwen, why doth thee begg none of

thes abbeys : I would gratifie thee some way : ' Quoth the other, ' Thank yow,' and afterwards said he would desire of him the Abbie of ffurneis (nye unto him) for 20ty one yeares, sayes the king, ' Take it for ever ;' Quoth the other, ' It is long enough, for youle set them up againe in that time ;' but they not likely to be set up againe, this Sir Thomas Curwen sent Mr. Preston, who had married his daughter, to renew the lease for him : *and he even renewed it in his own name* ; which, when his father-in-law questioned, quoth Mr. Preston, ' Yow shall have it as long as yow live ; And I think I might as well have it with your daughter as an other.' On the other hand it is stated that, soon after the dissolution of monasteries, Thomas Preston, of Preston Patrick and Levens, purchased the site of Furness Abbey from the Trustees of the Crown, with other considerable estates to the amount of £3,000 per annum, from which time he quitted Preston Patrick, and lived at the Abbey. However this may be, the present hotel was formerly a portion of Furness Abbey—probably the Eleemosynary—and has been repaired, altered, and modernized from time to time with dressed and inscribed stones from the Abbey.

In the year 1644, Sir John Preston resided at the Manor House, near to which the Royalist Army was drawn up in battle array to storm Hawcoat, a neighbouring village. Sir John had command of one regiment. The Hawcoat rebels, strengthened by a reinforcement of sailors from the Parliamentary fleet then at Peel, were entrenched some in the houses and others in the pinfold that was walled with stone, and which stood in the middle of the village. Sir Henry Slingsby, a Yorkshire baronet, who took part in the engagement, does not give the number killed, but says :—

“There was taken, besides killed, 200 foot, which were sent to the Prince; & 17 sailors and some rich countrymen were kept prisoners at Dalton Castle.” Again he says:—“we lost not any; only Sir John Preston had his horse killed, and it may seem that being down, some of the foot running by gave him a knock on the head, but some thought it was by falling upon a stone, for the contusion of his skull was made so in the middle of it as one could not imagine how the fall should make it. He lay in a swoon and speechless many days, but his perfect sense and understanding he recovered not for half a year after.”

In various apartments of the hotel sculptured stones may be met with, boldly drawn but rudely executed. Over the fire-place in the coffee-room there is a basso-relievo of “The Creation,” worked on a block of red sandstone of the neighbourhood. The scene presented by the artist is the moment when—

“Adam’s bride

Came from her closet in his side.”

The Creator, in loose flowing robes, is bending over the pair with his right hand upon the left shoulder of Eve as she gradually rises from Adam’s left side. Four trees, with a few deer and other animals, form the background to the picture, and underneath is written

“Post orbem conditum, Sexto die creatur homo.”

“On the sixth day after the world was built, man is created.”

This singular piece of sculpture has hitherto been considered unique. It is now, however, no longer so, inasmuch as it forms one of an interesting series, the prototype of which we have not yet been able to determine.

A writer in the *Times*, June 21st, 1875, in noticing

the sale of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's collection of pottery, thus alludes to one of the lots (253):—"This singular group recalls the sculpture of the same subject on the wall of the Cathedral at Orviata, attributed to some followers of the Pisani, when the Almighty, a full-length draped figure, appears to lift Eve by the shoulder, while her feet are still in the side of the sleeping Adam."

The late T. A. Beck, Esq., in his splendid monograph "*Annales Furnesienses*," is of opinion that the Sedilia and other ornamental portions of Furness Abbey, were the work of Italian artists. This would seem to confirm that view.

On a stone in the staircase is inscribed:—

"Querite primum regnum Dei, et hæc omnia adjicientur vobis."

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you."

Four other basso-relievos are in other rooms. One represents Jesus seated at a table with four disciples; an attendant is in the background, and in the front Mary Magdalene in the act of wiping the feet of Christ with her hair. Underneath is the following inscription:—

"Quæ · Lachrinis · Tibi · Christe · Lavat · Quæ · Sedula · Fuso · Tergit  
Crine · Pedes · Vngere · Prona · Capvt · Lavit · vt · Ablveres · vt · Tergae  
Tersit · vt · Vngas · Vnxit · Pacem · Optans · Oscula · Prima · Tvlit · Rex ·  
Fanvlam · Indesq · Ream · Paranymphts · Amantem · Respice · Solve · Fove ·  
Pœnitet · Orat · Amat."

"She who washes for Thee, O Christ, Thy feet with her tears; she who carefully wipes them with her unbound hair; she who is bending to anoint Thy head—washed that thou mayest wash—wiped that thou mayest wipe—anointed that Thou mayest anoint; desiring peace, offered the first kisses. As a King, regard thy handmaid; as a Judge, acquit her being a criminal; as a Bridegroom,



espouse her being in love. She repents, prays, and loves."

In another, Jesus, with four companions, stands whilst the woman with an issue of blood, having thrown herself at his feet, looks up imploringly, and with her left hand touches the hem of his garment. Underneath is inscribed :

" Marcida · Sangvineo · Langvebat · Fœmina · Flxxv  
 Exervciata · Anno · Ad · Dvo · Lvstra · Dvos  
 Ipsa · Tamen · Tanta · Est · Fidveia · Vestis · Iesv  
 Detvr · Ait · Limbvm · Tangere · Sana · Forem  
 Attinget · Flvidvs · Stetit · Hvmor · Cede · Redemr · Tor  
 Sic · Tangam · Vt · Bene · Stet · Qvod · Male · Corde · Flvit."

" A feeble woman with a bloody issue languished having been tormented for two years, in addition to two lustres.\* Nevertheless, so great was her confidence, that she said, let it be granted me to touch the hem of Jesus robe, I shall be whole. She touches: the flowing humour stood. Grant, O Redeemer, that as I thus touch, what has badly run from my heart may well stand."

Of statuary, but two examples remain. One is the beloved disciple, dressed in a loose gown and Roman toga, with the inscription :

" Discipulus Quem Dilicebat Iesus Apostulus Evanglista Propheta Pontifex Heres Virgo Confessor Et Martir Et Sæpissime Dixit Filiol Dilicite Alterutrum Quod Si Fiat Sufficit.

" Me Frater Moriens Genuit, Sine Matre Parenso ; Est Mihi Sed Facta Est non Pariendo Parens."

" The disciple whom Jesus loved, being an apostle, an evangelist, a prophet, a priest, a heir, a virgin, a confessor, and a martyr, very frequently said, ' My little children love one another, which, if it be done, is sufficient.'

" A brother dying begat me without a mother, a mother I have, but she was not made my mother by bringing me

---

\* Twelve years, for the lustre was a purgation of cleansing by sacrifice every fifth year.

forth."

The solution of the last curious sentence will be found in xix. chapter of John, 26th and 27th verses.

The other is a mutilated figure of John the Baptist, inscribed :—

"Inter Natos Mulierum Non Surrexit Major Joanne Baptista Quantum Ad Annuntiationem Quantum Ad Sanctificationem Ad Visitationem Nativitatum Conversationem Prædicationem Baptizationem Revelationem Commendationem Ab Ipso Christo Quantum Ad Celebrationem Nativitatis Suxæ Non Surrexit Major.

"Me Peperit Sterilis Vox Sum Muto Edita Fontem Fonte Lavo Æterno Prævis Atq Sequax."

"Among those born of women there has none risen a greater than John Baptist. As touching his annunciation as touching his sanctification, visitation, nativity, conversation, preaching, baptizing, revelation, commendation, from Christ himself, as touching also the celebration of his nativity there has not arisen a greater.

"A barren\* voice brought me forth. I am with one declared to be dumb. Going before and following, I wash a fountain in the eternal fountain."

The following are the principal interior dimensions of Furness Abbey :—

	<i>Length.</i>			<i>Width.</i>		
Church .....	276 ft.	0 in.	....	66 ft.	0 in.	
Chancel .....	53 "	6 "	....	27 "	6 "	
Transepts .....	130 "	0 "	....	30 "	0 "	
Sacristy .....	50 "	0 "	....	16 "	6 "	
Chapter-House .....	60 "	9 "	....	45 "	6 "	
Monks' Dormitory .....	202 "	6 "	....	30 "	6 "	
Cloisters .....	135 "	0 "	....	106 "	6 "	
Cloister Walks .....	— "	— "	....	12 "	0 "	
Cellarium .....	224 "	0 "	....	29 "	0 "	
Infirmary .....	153 "	0 "	....	47 "	6 "	
Abbot's House .....	70 "	0 "	....	26 "	0 "	

\* See Luke chapter i., verse 20.



*From Photo by G. Atkinson.*

The above is a facsimile of a Bulla or leaden seal of Pope Innocent IVth., which was found during the excavations to the west of the infirmary, September, 1897. The faces on the obverse side represent S. Paul and S. Peter.



MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.

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Chaucer, Langland, and other early English writers enter very strong complaints respecting the treatment and condition of the Abbey bondmen, or villans, in their days, and in many cases there appears to have been good grounds for such complaints. In 1538, Nicholas Tybbesone charged the Abbot of St. Albans, with his fellow-monk, Reginald of Spalding, that they assaulted, beat, wounded, and imprisoned him the said Nicholas, and kept him two days in prison till he paid them a fine of 76 shillings to let him go. They pleaded that Nicholas had no right of action against them, as he was their bondman. He could not deny this, and was in consequence "amerced for making a false complaint." Again, in 1355, the Abbot and his men break into the close of one of his villans, John Albyne, and carry off his bull and twenty-four cows, of the value of twenty marks. On suing the Abbot, he pleads that Albyne is his villan; and consequently the poor man loses not only his cattle, but is "amerced for making a false claim" to his property.

Against the Abbots of Furness, however, no such charges have been made, but, on the other hand, if we must believe the tenants of Furness, and we have no reason to doubt their truthfulness, the hospitality afforded was almost regal in its character. A bill filed in the Court of Chan-

cery for the Duchy of Lancaster, against Borgrave, the then Attorney-General, states that the tenants "did receive, had, and took out of the said monastery, great reliefs, sustentation and commodities for themselves and their children — that the tenants did receive weekly of the said monastery, sixty barrels of beer or ale, every barrel containing ten gallons or thereabouts—that the tenants had also weekly, thirty dozens of coarse wheat bread, and sufficient iron for their ploughs and other utensils of husbandry, and timber for repairing their houses; that every tenant having a plough had two persons to come to dinner one day in every week, from Martinmas to Pentecost; and that it was lawful for the tenants to send their children to school in the monastery, and such children were allowed to come into the hall every day either to dinner or supper." These statements were afterwards substantiated by good evidence. Robert Wayles, 78 years of age, a native of Kirkby Ireleth, said that he had "divers and many times seen the tenants thereabouts resort to the said monastery on the tunning days, sometimes with twenty horses, sometimes thirty horses, and had delivered unto every of them firkins or barrels of beer or ale; every barrel or firkinge containing, as he then heard reported, ten or twelve gallons a-piece, or thereabouts, which they carried away with them upon their carrs or carriages; and that the same as he thinketh, was worth about ten-pence or twelve-pence a barrel, or firkinge at that time." He also affirmed that this "beer or ale" was delivered weekly, and that each tenant receiving a barrel had also a dozen loaves of bread, of the value of sixpence. It must, however, be borne in mind that as flour was then sold at eight shillings per quarter, so each sixpennyworth

of bread would contain no less than two pecks. Another witness deposed that the children of the tenants were in the habit of going to the Abbey, where they were provided with dinner or supper. John Richardson also stated that there was a grammar school and a singing school within the monastery, to which the children of the tenants resorted without payment; and Richard Banks averred that the tenants, their families, and children, received weekly, in addition to these privileges, a sum equal to 40s. sterling.

In 1536, when Henry decided upon the suppression, or confiscation of the smaller monasteries, a bill was brought into Parliament, and Hume states, "It does not appear that any opposition was made to this important law." But Sir Henry Spelman, in his "*De non Temerandis Ecclesiis*," or History of Sacrilege, says:—"The bill stuck long in the Lower House, and could get no passage, when the King commanded the Commons to attend him in the forenoon in his gallery, where he let them wait till late in the afternoon, and then coming out of his chamber, walking a turn or two amongst them, and looking angrily on them, first on one side and then on the other, at last, *I hear* (saith he), *that my bill will not pass, but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads*; and, without further rhetoric, returned to his chamber. Enough was said; the bill passed, and all was given him as he desired."

As a preamble of a bill always contains the reasons for its enactments, it may interest our readers to see the one prefixed to the act under notice. It commences:—

"Forasmuch as manifest synne, vicious, carnel, and abominable living is dayly used and committed commonly in such little and small Abbeyes, Priories, and other

Religious Houses of Monks, Canons, and Nuns, where the Congregation of such Religious Persons is under the number of Twelve Persons, whereby the Governors of such Religious Houses and their Convent, spoyle, destroye, consume, and utterly waste, as well their Churches, Monasteries, Priories, principal Farms, Granges, Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, as the Ornaments of their Churches, and their Goods and Chattels to the high Displeasure of Almighty God, Slander of good religion, and of the great infamy of the king's Highness and the Realm, if Redress should not be had thereof. And albeit that many continual visitations hath been heretofore had, by the Space of two hundred years and more, for an honest and charitable Reformation of such unthrifty, carnal, and abominable Living, yet nevertheless, little or none Amendment is hitherto had, but their vicious living shamelessly increaseth and augmenteth, and by a cursid Custom so rooted and infected, that a great multitude of the Religious Persons in such small Houses do rather choose to rove abroad in Apostacy, than to conform themselves to the observation of good Religion ; so that without such small Houses be utterly suppressed, and the Religious Persons therein committed to great and Honourable Monasteries of Religion in this Realm where they may be compelled to live religiously for Reformation of their Lives the same else be no Redress nor Reformation in that Behalf. In Consideration whereof, the King's most Royal Majesty, being supreme Head on Earth, under God, of the Church of England, dayly studying and devysing the Increase, Advancement, and Exaltation of true Doctrine and Virtue in the said Church, to the only Glory and Honour of God,

and the total extirpating and destruction of Vice and Sin, having knowledge that the Premises be true, as well as the Accompts of his late Visitations, as by sundry credible Informations, considering also that divers and great solemn Monasteries of this Realm, wherein (Thanks be to God) Religion is right well kept and observed, be destitute of such full numbers of Religious Persons, as they ought and may keep, hath thought good that a plain Declaration should be made of the Premises, as well as to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, as to other his loving Subjects the Commons, in this present Parliament assembled: Whereupon the said Lords and Commons, by a great Deliberation, finally be resolved, that it is and shall be much more to the pleasure of Almighty God, and for the Honour of this his Realm that the Possessions of such Small Religious Houses, now being spent, spoiled, and wasted for Increase and Maintenance of Sin, should be used and committed to better uses, and the unthrifty Religious Persons, so spending the same, to be compelled to reform their Lives."

After the preamble followed the enactments, and about three hundred and seventy-six Monasteries were confiscated, and all their estates, real and personal, devolved upon the king and his heirs. The large Monasteries soon followed, and strong pressure was put upon those who hung back or refused to surrender voluntarily.

The interval between abandonment and ruin of a building like Furness Abbey is generally very short; and the structure that would otherwise have withstood the storms of a thousand years, soon fell to decay, and now :—

" Alone, and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits."



“How and when the Abbey Site and Territories were first alienated from the Crown is a matter of uncertainty, for there are no records extant in which the nature or date of such alienation is definitely referred to. The preamble to an Act of Parliament of George I., (1714), recites that “the site of the dissolved Monastery, with several messuages, lands and tenements thereunto belonging, were purchased from the trustees for the crown, *soon after the Dissolution of Monasteries*, by the ancestors of Sir Thomas Preston,” but this vague statement is all that can be traced as to any alienation up to the time of James I. In fifth year of his reign, King James “passed and assigned unto Robert, Earl of Salisbury, the site of the late Monastery of Furness, and all other hereditaments whatsoever, with the appurtenances, sometime parcel of the possessions of the late Monastery of Furness, in the County of Lancaster, and hereafter demised or mentioned to be demised, to John Preston or Gilbert Garrett, Esq., or either of them.” In the following year the Earl passed his interest in these possessions to Richard Holland and Robert Cantsfield, for the consideration of an annual payment of £70 13s. 2d. The fishing of Ramshead and Walney, as well as that of Oysterbank, and some acres of land in Angerton Moss, with the herbage of Sourby Wood, were granted on lease to John Preston, of Preston Patrick, and Under Levens Hall, at reserved rents amounting in the whole to £5 18s. 8d. per annum. The same gentleman obtained a lease from the Crown, in the seventh year of the reign of Elizabeth, of the sheep pasture of Stanyan Cot and Ireleth Cot, for a term of years, at an annual rent of £3. Eventually, he became possessed of

the manor of Dalton, and built a manor house on the north side of the Abbey precincts, where he took up his residence. His son and heir, Thomas Preston, died at the Abbey, according to the Dalton parish register, on the 14th of May, 1604, leaving an only son, John Preston, who built a new manor house on the site of the ruins of the Abbot's apartments, preserving some portion of the ancient walls in the structure. His elder son, John, was created a baronet in 1644, and dying without issue, was succeeded by his brother, Sir Thomas Preston, in whose time the estates were valued at £3,000 per annum. When Sir Thomas became a Roman Catholic, he granted away his estates for religious purposes. This step was, however, stoutly resisted, as prejudicing the rights of the heir to the property, Thomas Preston, and after a protracted suit in the Court of Exchequer, the estates fell to the Crown, and were granted by Charles II. to Thomas Preston for a term of seven years, at a rental of £400. James II. granted the reversion of the estates to religious uses, but the grant was rendered null and void by the Revolution, and again the estates passed to Thomas Preston, by a grant from the Crown. His daughter and heiress, Katherine, married William Lowther, Esq., of Marsh, in Yorkshire, who was afterwards raised to the baronetcy, and died in 1705. His son and heir, Sir Thomas Lowther, being a minor, his rights were endangered, and were only finally settled by George I., by an Act of Parliament, under the provisions of which the fee of the Abbey and Lands were conveyed to him and his heirs. He married Elizabeth, daughter of William, Duke of Devonshire, and was succeeded by his son, Sir William Lowther, the last male

heir of the Prestons, of Preston Patrick, who on his death in 1756, bequeathed all his estates to his cousin, Lord George Augustus Cavendish, from whom they have descended to the present Duke of Devonshire.”—*Richardsons*  
“*Furness Past and Present.*”



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